

Transition Guidance: Moving to the Code of Practice for Statistics Edition 3.0

1. Purpose of the Guidance

This guidance sets out how the [Office for Statistics Regulation](#) (OSR) will be applying the [Code of Practice for Statistics Edition 3.0](#) (Code 3.0) from launch. It is primarily intended for Heads of Profession for Statistics, Chief Statisticians, Senior Statisticians, Lead Officials and other producers of official statistics.

Code 3.0 reflects evolving standards and expectations for how statistics are produced, used and shared. We want to make sure that you are fully aware of the changes and are equipped with the tools that you need to start embedding the refreshed Code into your teams' work from day one. Early planning and active engagement following the launch of Code 3.0 will be essential to ensuring a smooth transition.

2. Transition from Code 2.1 to 3.0

Heads of Profession are expected to begin applying the [principles of Code 3.0](#) from the launch date – 30 October 2025. While the Code is effective immediately, we recognise that teams will need time to adjust. Time will be allowed for updates to processes, staff training and system adaptations. More detail around our expectations is given in sections 3, 4 and 5 below.

During this transition phase, OSR will take a proportionate and pragmatic approach to compliance. Guidance and support will be available to help you navigate the transition, and we will consider:

- Specific departmental circumstances.
- Existing publication plans and timelines.
- The fact that some areas of Code 3.0 are new, though not necessarily new to statistical practice.

The following sections detail the arrangements for transitioning to the use of Code 3.0. There are three sections of the Code that need to be considered, which are addressed in the following order: the Standards for Official Statistics; the Standards for the Public Use of Statistics, Data and Wider Analysis; and the Code Principles.

3. Standards for Official Statistics (SOS) Arrangements

The [Standards for Official Statistics](#) (SOS) set out the specific practices producers must follow to ensure that statistics serve the public good and are grounded in the principles of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value (TQV).

These standards apply directly to producers of official statistics and underpin OSR's regulatory work.

From launch, all OSR [assessments](#) and [compliance reviews](#) will be based on Code 3.0, including the updated SOS.

This means:

- Accreditation decisions will reflect adherence to the new standards.
- Compliance reviews will assess progress against the updated expectations.
- Casework received after launch will be considered against Code 3.0, while recognising that the new Code will be in the process of being embedded.

Transitional Arrangements

To support a smooth transition:

- Regulatory work initiated before launch that is in the meeting requirements stage will continue under Code 2.1.
- For other regulatory work, OSR will take a proportionate and pragmatic approach to regulatory compliance.
- We will:
 - Recognise work already underway.
 - Encourage early conversations about compliance.
 - Consider department-specific circumstances and existing publication timelines.
 - Acknowledge that some areas are new to the Code, though not necessarily new to practice.

Where full compliance is not immediately possible, we encourage you to develop a clear and achievable plan, with a realistic timetable, to work towards meeting the new standards.

Timeline Guidance

From Launch: Compliance Expectations

To ensure a smooth and compliant transition to the new Code of Practice, producers should take the following actions from launch:

- Review the [Standards for Official Statistics](#) (SOS): Familiarise yourself thoroughly with the SOS to understand its scope and implications for your work and all your outputs.
- Communicate the change within your team: Ensure all relevant team members are aware that the new SOS will be applied during OSR regulatory reviews.
- Evaluate current practices: Consider your existing procedures and practices and see if there are any areas that may require development to meet new standards.

- Develop an action plan for changes to be made over the coming 6 months at both the organisational and output-specific level. If you see the need for more substantial change that will take longer to address, it would be worthwhile contacting your Head of Profession for Statistics. If you believe there are significant areas of non-compliance for some accredited official statistics, be sure to get in touch with the relevant [domain team in OSR](#) to discuss your concerns about compliance.
- Confirm readiness prior to review: If you are looking to request that your statistics are assessed against the Code, you should first ensure that you are content that they fully comply with the updated SOS.

Embedding the [principles of Code 3.0](#) serves as a valuable opportunity for producers to reflect on the application of the Code and identify areas for development and improvement.

Within 6 Months of Launch: Organisational Requirements

For organisational-level or trustworthiness requirements, we expect producers to review practices and publish any materials within 6 months of launch, including:

- Publishing a statement of compliance with the Code.
- Publishing your organisations:
 - release practice policy
 - data management policy
 - public involvement and engagement strategy
- Actively engage key users to identify or review priority questions that your statistics should answer, and report findings and decisions in your annual statistical work programme. Where a statistical work programme is not already in place, departments should take steps to develop one to ensure that user engagement is systematically captured and informs future priorities.

A full list can be found in our guidance on [required policies and statements relating to official statistics production](#).

Status of Existing Accredited Official Statistics (AOS)

Existing [accredited official statistics](#) (AOS) will not need to be re-assessed against the new Code to keep their accreditation. OSR will continue to plan its schedule for review against the Code on a priority basis. It would be valuable for producer teams to reflect on their own application of the Code standards and self-evaluate how effectively they are able to demonstrate those standards.

If you are interested in obtaining accredited official statistics status for your statistics, please contact OSR by emailing regulation@statistics.gov.uk.

4. Standards for the Public Use of Statistics, Data and Wider Analysis Arrangements

From the launch of Code 3.0, the [Standards for the Public Use of Statistics, Data and Wider Analysis](#) apply. These standards are designed to ensure that statistics and data used in the public domain are communicated with integrity, clarity and accuracy.

Key points:

- The standards for the Public Use of Statistics, Data and Wider Analysis apply from launch and should be factored into your department's implementation planning.
- The standards build on the principles of [intelligent transparency](#), promoting proactive openness, clarity and accessibility in how statistics, data and wider analysis are communicated.
- In line with our current approach to intelligent transparency, the primary way that OSR will regulate against the standards will be through [casework](#).
- The standards will not form a core part of the accreditation decisions in assessments and compliance reviews of official statistics. However, regulators may review how the official statistics in question are used in the public domain in line with these standards to determine how an official statistics producer body supports general adherence to the Code.

Broader Relevance:

The [Standards for the Public Use of Statistics, Data and Wider Analysis](#) apply beyond the publication of official statistics, which makes them relevant not only to statisticians but also to analysts, communications and policy professionals; special advisers; and ministers. We encourage Heads of Profession to actively promote the standards beyond the statistical community. We have [promotional materials](#) available to help you share the standards more widely. If you would like support in doing this, please get in touch with the relevant [domain](#).

5. Code Principles Arrangements

From the launch of the Code of Practice for Statistics Version 3.0, the Code Principles will be available to guide the production of statistics as well as other analysis.

The [Code Principles](#) have been designed to be applied by people in different roles, including analytical, operational, policy and communication roles, who are working with different types of evidence and analysis, such as data science, management information, economic analysis and social research. They can be used both inside government and in other settings such as the commercial sector, academia and voluntary sector.

Key points:

- The [Code Principles](#) unpack the core principles of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value. Taken together, they provide an ethical framework that can support the publication of any kind of analysis or evidence.
- Those producing official statistics can use the Code Principles to help understand what is required of them to deliver statistics that serve the public good and to communicate these expectations to others. However, they should additionally comply with the [Standards for Official Statistics](#) (see section 3).
- Heads of Profession for Statistics, Chief Statisticians, Senior Statisticians, Lead Officials and other producers of official statistics can draw on the Code Principles when advising on the production and use of other types of data, such as management information, within their organisations.
- Any producer of data, statistics and analysis that are not official statistics who is applying the Code Principles can be encouraged to be part of the voluntary application (VA) scheme run by the Office for Statistics Regulation. The scheme reflects an ongoing commitment to apply TQV.